NAMI WALK BREAKS FORMER RECORDS
By Kathleen Piché, L.C.S.W., Public Affairs Director

"Improving lives and our communities one step at a time." This is the goal of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). LACDMH staff were part of the record breaking 4,000 people who helped NAMI move toward their goal on October 5, 2013, at the 11th annual Los Angeles area NAMI Walk. One of the largest and most successful mental health awareness fund raising event in America, the walk took place at the Third Street Promenade to raise money for the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

 At LACDMH headquarters, many of us experienced NAMI fundraising efforts over the past few months; participating in raffles, ice cream socials, nacho bars and silent auctions. All you efforts have paid off—the goal for this year was up $100,000 from last year to $400,000. As of October 8th, ninety-two percent of this year's goal had been met, making it a safe bet that NAMI will meet and most likely exceed the $400,000 mark.

"There was a unifying and uplifting feeling during the walk," said Shelly Hoffman, who organized the event this year. "When the New Directions Veterans Choir sang *Stand By Me*, it was plain what it was all about—standing by one another."

Congrats to all LACDMH teams, especially team ASOC (Adult System of Care) who exceeded their goal of raising $6,000 and raised $7,735.10, to be the number five ranked team in L.A.

Jim Randall, part of the San Fernando Valley Chapter, won first prize in the t-shirt contest; he received a $25 gift certificate to Trader Joe's, which he has already used. About the design of the superhero themed shirt, Jim said, "One of my Family-to-Family graduates, Kigan St. Martin, is a clothing designer. So I asked him if he could find a graphic with a 'Super hero.' Then he put that in with the text that I gave him. Another Family-to-Family graduate, Sara, has a friend who prints t-shirts. I asked for orange since I like that better than yellow or blue. The rest is history."